

Policy: **Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department**

Section: **Health Promotion**

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Sarah Reese, Director

Original Policy Date: 4/24/2017

Revision Date: 09/22/2017

## **Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department**

**Policy:** Polk County Public Health supports breastfeeding as the preferred feeding option for infants. Public Health will collaborate with community partners to identify and remove barriers for mothers who breastfeed, educate parents and community partners about the benefits of long term breastfeeding, incorporate breastfeeding messages into Public Health messaging about nutrition, provide training to public health staff about the advantages of breastfeeding and how to effectively communicate the information to clients.

**Purpose:** To ensure Polk County Public Health meets the 10 steps for a successful breastfeeding health department. The department will comply with breastfeeding laws and acts to increase the impact of broad population-based approaches to improve health in our communities. Polk County Public Health will actively promote, support and protect breastfeeding at an individual, community and systems levels; provide information on the benefits and risks in decision making to support optimal outcomes associated with breastfeeding; provide education and information to the community on the importance of breastfeeding and the health benefits it provides; and provide opportunities to increase community knowledge about infant feeding methods in order to dispel incorrect assumptions.

**Procedures:** All Public Health staff (including when applicable interns, contract staff, volunteers, and students) will:

- Receive & review information about the state and federal laws & statutes supporting breastfeeding.
- All mothers will be given contact information of community-based breastfeeding support groups and individual breastfeeding services during their initial encounter with Polk County Public Health staff, universal postpartum packets, or upon request.
- Mothers identified as having breastfeeding challenges will be referred internally to IBCLC or CLC trained staff. If lactation staff are not available within 2 hours, the client will be referred to their medical provider/lactation consultant.
- Assure materials created and distributed by Polk County Public Health will be free of images and references of infant formula and baby bottles. Purchased material will be assessed by approving supervisory staff so it

provides informed decision-making when discussing infant feeding practices.

- Receive orientation that includes reviewing the breastfeeding policy and program-specific practice information for supporting breastfeeding.
- Communicate and reinforce the written policy on breastfeeding promotion on an annual basis.

Statement: As a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department, Polk County Public Health Department will:

1. Establish a designated individual/group to manage the following tasks including policy review, development, staff orientation and education.
2. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely reviewed with department staff and meets the following criteria including addressing all BFHD 10 steps.
3. Coordinate breastfeeding support and promotion with other programs in the health department, private and public health care systems, and community organizations to establish breastfeeding as the “norm” in the community.
4. Collaborate with community partners to assure access to breastfeeding classes for prenatal women.
5. Educate the community on breastfeeding support.
6. Encourage racially and ethnically diverse resources within the community.
7. Support mothers in initiating and maintaining breastfeeding up to 12 months and beyond.
8. Through community partners, encourage local public places to provide a breastfeeding friendly environment for families.
9. Select businesses each year and provide worksite lactation support training.
10. Facilitate access to information and training for local childcare centers/providers/schools on how to support a breastfeeding mother.

#### Authorities and References

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